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Brussels, 9-7-2003

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**MINUTES REGARDING THE FILING OF
A PATENT APPLICATION**

No. 2002/0448

Today, 18/07/2002 in Brussels, at 16 hours 22 minutes.
at the Service for Industrial Property a mail delivery arrived containing an application for a patent of invention relating to: "Accessory for a writing board, file or the like which is equipped with such an accessory".

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The application, as filed, contains documents which, in accordance with article 16, paragraph 1 of the Law of March 28, 1984, are required in order to obtain a filing date.

The authorized registrar

Ir. F. VERSTRAELEN
Director

Brussels, 18/07/2002

Accessory for a writing board, file or the like which is equipped with such an accessory.

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The present invention concerns an accessory for a writing board, a file or the like, as well as a writing board, file or the like which is equipped with such an accessory or which is fit, in other words comprises special provisions,
10 to be equipped with such an accessory.

For clarity's sake, we will only mention a file in what follows, by which is meant, as if it were, every support upon which the accessory can be provided.

15

It is known that, in order to keep loose documents together, use can be made of a file consisting of a front wall part, a rear wall part connected to it by means of a back part, and at least one inwardly folded flap formed on
20 one of the aforesaid wall parts which is held at a distance from the accompanying wall part via side pieces. When the file is folded open, the loose documents can be slid in the space situated between the flap and the wall part onto which said flap is fixed. By folding up the file, the
25 loose documents are prevented from leaving the space.

It is also known that such files with separate side pieces can be commercialized, which side pieces will have to be mounted later on by the consumer or retailer. This offers
30 the advantage that the whole, formed of the above-mentioned wall parts, the back part and the flap, can be made flat,

such that, in view of its commercialization and distribution, the volume to be packed and transported can be reduced to a minimum.

5 It is also known to mount a binding mechanism with rings on the flap, near its free end, in the factory, so that documents can be stored loosely in the file in the above-mentioned space on the one hand, and documents can also be fixed in the file by means of the binding mechanism on the
10 other hand.

A disadvantage of such a binding mechanism which is permanently fixed on the flap consists in that it takes up a lot of space and that one cannot always be sure that the
15 selected binding mechanism is the right one. Another disadvantage consists in that the fixed binding mechanism on the flap forms an obstacle, so that parcels containing such files are more difficult to pack and to distribute. Especially in the case of files whereby, as mentioned
20 above, use is made of separate connecting pieces to keep said flap at a distance from the accompanying wall part, the major advantage that such files could be packed with a minimum of lost space, is undone so to say by the presence of the binding mechanism.

25

The present invention aims an accessory for a file which is in the first place meant to be used with the aforesaid type of file and with which the above-mentioned disadvantages of the ring mechanism which is fixed on the flap can be
30 excluded or at least minimized. In general, however, it also aims an accessory which can be used in combination

with other types of files, and which offers several advantages.

To this end, the invention concerns an accessory for a
5 file, characterized in that it at least consists of a
holder which can be provided to a file whereby this holder
works in conjunction with or can work in conjunction with a
binding mechanism of the type containing elements over
10 which documents that are provided with openings can be
threaded on the one hand, and whereby this holder comprises
means which make it possible to attach it manually to a
file on the other hand.

By manually is meant that the holder can be provided to the
15 file by the consumer or the retailer himself, without any
machinery, and preferably not any tools either being
required.

By making use of a binding mechanism provided on a holder
20 according to the invention, which holder can be provided to
a file by the consumer himself or the like, it is clear
that several advantages are obtained.

Thus, for example, the consumer can decide himself whether
25 he either or not wishes to equip a file with a binding
mechanism.

As holders with binding mechanisms of different nature or
size are offered, the user can determine himself what sort
30 of binding mechanism he will equip the file with.

By packing and distributing the actual files on the one hand and the holders with the binding mechanism on the other hand while they are not coupled, the occupied volume can be reduced to a minimum.

5

Although the present invention can be realized with different types of binding mechanisms, it is clear that it is particularly useful in the case where the binding mechanism is a mechanism of the type which is equipped with
10 rings having a predominantly rigid shape, consisting of at least two parts provided on a base element and which can be moved between an open and a closed position. Such conventional ring binding mechanisms occupy relatively much space as such, and it is particularly useful if they can be
15 transported when dismounted.

The binding mechanism is preferably mounted fixed on the holder, but according to a variant it is not excluded to mount it in a replaceable manner on the holder such that,
20 with only one holder, it is possible to provide several optional binding mechanisms for a file. The binding mechanism can hereby be connected to the holder in any way whatsoever. In case of a fixed connection, it is for example possible to use rivets. In the case of a
25 replaceable system, use can be made of screwed connections, snap-in systems, etc.

The means which make it possible to fix the holder to a file consist in their simplest form of a U-shaped part
30 which is provided over the file edge concerned in a

clamping manner, so that the holder can be removed again at any time and can possibly be used with another file.

5 The above-mentioned means preferably consist of detachable connecting means which, after the accessory has been provided to a file, also make it possible to remove and provide them at any time.

10 According to the most preferred embodiment, the means which make it possible to fix the holder to a file consist of connecting means providing for a snap-in connection. As a result, the holder can be easily snapped in a file, without any complicated mounting operations being required.

15 The holder, in particular the above-mentioned means for fixing it to a file, preferably comprises locking means which allow to keep the holder in place in relation to the file, which preferably consist of parts such as pins which can mesh in openings in the file.

20 The holder can be either or not equally long as the element upon which it is provided.

25 Naturally, the invention also concerns files which are equipped with a holder and a binding mechanism as described above.

30 The invention also concerns files which are characterized in that they comprise provisions, in particular openings or the like, which make it possible to equip these files with such an accessory.

In order to better explain the characteristics of the invention, the following preferred embodiments are described as an example only without being limitative in any way, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

figure 1 represents an accessory according to the invention in perspective, together with a wall part of a file with which it can co-operate;
figure 2 represents the part indicated by F2 in figure 1 to a larger scale, whereby two parts have been cut out from the accessory;
figure 3 is a view analogous to that in figure 1, but for the mounted condition of the accessory;
figure 4 represents a section according to line IV-IV in figure 3;
figure 5 represents a section as in figure 4, but while the accessory is being applied;
figure 6 represents a file equipped with the accessory from figures 1 to 5;
figures 7 and 8 represent two variants;
figures 9 and 10 represent a section of another variant of the invention, in a dismounted and mounted condition respectively.

Figures 1 to 5 represent an accessory 1 according to the invention, together with a wall part 2 of a file 3 which is not represented as a whole. The wall part 2 consists of a relatively rigid material, such as cardboard.

The accessory 1 mainly consists of a holder 4 upon which is provided a binding mechanism 5 and which is provided with means 6 which enable the holder 4 to be manually fixed to the file 3.

5

The binding mechanism 5 is of the type comprising elements, in particular rings 7, over which documents 8 provided with openings 9 can be threaded. The rings 7 are produced in the conventional manner. They have a predominantly rigid shape and each consist of at least two parts 10-11 provided on a base element 12 and which can be moved between an open and a closed condition. This base element 12 preferably comprises a snap-in system known as such which allows the parts 10-11 to be moved to and fro over a dead centre by exerting a force in order to put them in an open, closed position respectively. It is clear that, according to a variant, the base element 12 may also comprise other systems, such as for example a lever-operated system.

20 In the example from figures 1 to 5, the binding mechanism 5 is mounted fixed on the holder 4, by means of rivets 13. According to a variant which is not represented, the binding mechanism 5 can also be mounted on the holder 4 in a detachable and replaceable manner.

25

The holder 4, in particular the above-mentioned means 6, are configured such that the holder 4 can be provided over the edge 14 of the wall part 2. To this end, the holder 4 is mainly made as a U-shaped body which can be pushed over the edge 14.

30

The U-shaped holder 4 hereby comprises a part 15 which is situated in a first plane 16 and a part 17 which is situated in a second plane 18, as well as a back part 19 connecting the parts 15 and 17. The parts 15 and 17 form
5 the legs of the U-shape and define contact surfaces 20-21 on their sides turned towards one another, situated parallel to one another at a mutual distance D1 which corresponds or practically corresponds to the thickness D2 of the wall part 2 for which the accessory 1 has been
10 designed.

The part 15 is made as a supporting plate, designed to lie against the wall part 2, such that a stable support is offered and the binding mechanism 5 will not tilt in
15 relation to the wall part 2.

The part 17 forms an elastically bendable part and is provided with parts, in this case two round pins 22 with beveled far ends 23, which can work in conjunction with
20 openings 24 in the wall part 2, in this case in the shape of round perforations. These pins 22 thus form locking means which enable the holder 4, as will be explained hereafter, to be held in place in relation to the file 3.

25 The working and use of the accessory 1 can be easily derived from figures 1 to 5.

In order to fix the accessory 1 on the wall part 2, the part 17 is elastically bent open and, subsequently, as
30 represented in figure 5, is pushed as of the edge 14 over the wall part 2 concerned, until the pins 22 mesh in the

openings 24 as the part 17 springs back elastically, as a result of which a locked condition is created, as represented in figures 3 and 4.

- 5 The distance at which the openings 24 are situated from the edge 14 is preferably selected such that the holder 4 ends up with its back part 17 against said edge 14, which contributes to the stability of the fixing.
- 10 After the holder 4 has been fixed to the file 3, the file 3 can be used as a ring file.

Figure 6 represents a practical application, whereby the accessory 1 according to the invention is provided to a
15 file 3 of the type consisting of a front wall part 25, a rear wall part 27 connected to the latter by means of a back part 26 and at least one inwardly folded flap 28 formed on one of the aforesaid wall parts, in this case on the rear wall part 27, which is held at a distance from the
20 accompanying wall part 27 via side pieces 29 which can preferably be mounted separately. The holder 4 is hereby mounted on the free edge 14 of the flap 28, whereby in an analogous manner as described above with reference to figures 1 to 5, the flap 28 naturally is also provided with
25 holes 24. As explained in the introduction, the accessory is particularly advantageous for this type of files.

It is clear that the invention is not restricted to binding mechanisms 5 with two rings 7. Figure 7 represents for
30 example a variant with four rings 7.

Also, instead of round openings 24 and round parts or pins 22, holes and co-operating parts in other shapes can be applied. In the embodiment from figure 8, use is made of longitudinal openings 30 as well as longitudinal parts 31
5 which can take place in said openings 30.

In the embodiment from figure 8, the parts 31 are each provided on a separate elastically bendable part 17.

10 It is clear that the holder 4 must not necessarily be U-shaped and that the means 6 and, in particular the locking means used thereby to keep the holder 4 in its position in relation to a file 3, can be made according to a large number of variants.

15 As an illustration, a variant is represented in figures 9 and 10 whereby the holder 4 consists of two separate parts 32-33 which can be provided on either side of a wall part 2 of a file 3 and which can be snapped into one another
20 through holes 34 provided therein by means of coupling parts 35-36.

The variant from figures 9 and 10 also shows that the base element 12 onto which the rings 7 are fixed simultaneously
25 serves as part 32 of the holder. It is clear, however, that according to a variant of the embodiment from figures 9 and 10, the base element 12 could also be fixed on a separate support first, which then assumes the function of the part 32.

The invention is by no means limited to the above-described embodiments given as an example and represented in the accompanying drawings; on the contrary, such an accessory, as well as the files which can be equipped with such an
5 accessory, can be made in different shapes and dimensions while still remaining within the scope of the invention.

Claims.

- 5 1. Accessory for a writing board, a file or the like,
characterized in that it at least consists of a
holder (4) which can be provided to a file or the
like (3), whereby this holder (4) works in
conjunction with or can work in conjunction with a
10 binding mechanism (5) of the type comprising elements
over which documents (8) that are provided with
openings (9) can be threaded on the one hand, and
whereby this holder (4) can be manually attached to a
file or the like (3) on the other hand.
- 15 2. Accessory according to claim 1, characterized in that
the holder (4) can be fixed to the file or the like
(3) with the help of means (6).
- 20 3. Accessory according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in
that the above-mentioned binding mechanism (5) is a
mechanism of the type which is provided with rings
(7) having a predominantly rigid shape, consisting of
at least two parts (10-11) provided on a base element
25 (12) and which can be moved between an open and a
closed position.
- 30 4. Accessory according to claim 1, characterized in that
the holder is U-shaped and can be provided over the
file or the like (3) in a clamping manner.

5. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the binding mechanism (5) is mounted fixed on the holder (4).

5 6. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the binding mechanism (5) is mounted on the holder (4) in a replaceable manner.

10 7. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the means (6) which allow to fix the holder (4) to a file or the like (3) consist of detachable connecting means which allow for a removal and possibly a re-use.

15 8. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the means (6) consist of a snap-in connection.

20 9. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the holder (4) comprises a part (15) made as a supporting plate, designed to lie against a part of the file or the like (3), whereby the above-mentioned binding mechanism (5) is or can be mounted on this part.

25 10. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the above-mentioned means (6), the holder (4) respectively, are configured such that this holder (4) can be fixed over the edge (14) of a
30 rigid wall part (2) of a file (3).

11. Accessory according to claim 10, characterized in that the holder (4) is made in the shape of a predominantly U-shaped body, such that it can be pushed over the edge (14) of a rigid wall part (2) of a file (3) thanks to this U-shaped design.

12. Accessory according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the holder (4) is provided with locking means which make it possible to keep the holder (4) in its position in relation to the file (3).

13. Accessory according to claim 12, characterized in that locking means consist of one or several parts (22-31) which can mesh in an opening, in openings (24-30-34) respectively in a wall part (2) of the file (3).

14. Accessory according to claim 13, characterized in that the above-mentioned part, the above-mentioned parts (22-31) respectively, are provided on an elastically bendable part (17), bendable parts (17) of the holder (4) respectively, such that the first-mentioned parts (22-31) are forced into the above-mentioned openings (24-30) when provided to a file (3).

15. Accessory according to claim 11 and 14, characterized in that the above-mentioned part, the above-mentioned parts (22-31) respectively, are provided on one or several elastically bendable parts (17) forming the

leg of the aforesaid U-shape which is situated opposite to the leg which works in conjunction with the binding mechanism (5) or can work in conjunction with it, and in that the aforesaid part, the aforesaid parts (22-31) respectively, consist of a pin, pins respectively, which can work in conjunction with openings (24-30) in a file (3).

16. Writing board, file or the like, characterized in that it is equipped with a holder (4) and a binding mechanism (5), as described in any of the preceding claims.

17. Writing board, file or the like, characterized in that it comprises provisions, in particular openings (24-30-34) or the like, which make it possible to equip said file or the like (3) with an accessory (1) as described in any of claims 1 to 3.

18. Writing board, file or the like according to claim 14 or 15, characterized in that it concerns a file or the like (3) of the type consisting of a front wall part (25), a rear wall part (27) connected thereto by means of a back part (26) and at least one inwardly folded flap (28) formed on one of the aforesaid wall parts, which is held at a distance from the accompanying wall part via side pieces (29), whereby the holder (4) is mounted on the free edge (14) of the flap (28) and whereby, near this free edge (14) are at least provided means for providing such a holder (4) on it.